

Transition Career Exploration Workshop

Decide and Develop Plan



The Transition Career Exploration Workshop is a product of the Maine Department of Labor. The ND Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has permission to add the ND DVR brand to all information.



Facilitator Notes:

Explain to participants that the D section is where we pull together what they have learned about themselves (S for Self) and what they've learned about occupations of interest (O for Occupations) into a tentative plan for their future, realizing that their plan is a "work in progress" and will be evolving as they accomplish different steps in their plan.

As a reminder, VR participants will be working with their VR Counselor to create a final plan. However, if they have a viable goal that VR can support, this is very good.

Call their attention to the glass icon that represents the Decide and Develop a Plan component.

Making Informed Decisions

- **What is a decision?**
 - The process of selecting from several choices and/or ideas to make up your mind about something.
 - Gathering facts, looking at the pros and cons, likes and dislikes, considering your priorities and the consequences are all part of the process.
- **So why have we been collecting all this data?**
 - To make informed decisions and choices when creating an employment plan.

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Facilitator's Notes: **Important conversation – Projected time: 30-40minutes**

The ability to make informed decisions is the cornerstone to the rehabilitation process with clients. And if you think about it, it is the cornerstone for everyone when making reasonable decisions.

What is a decision?

-The process of selecting from several choices and/or ideas through consideration to make up your mind about something.
- Gathering facts, looking at pros and cons, considering the priorities and consequences, likes and dislikes, considering your priorities and the consequences are all part of the decision making process. The ability to making wise, reliable, valuable decisions is an important skill for anyone to have.

So why have we been collecting all this data?

Up to this point, you (the participant) have been doing a lot of extensive investigation and research around who you are, what your interests are, what skills you have (or don't have), what skills are transferable, what the labor market looks like, the kind of skills needed for different occupations of interest and what kind of accommodation might be necessary to do the work you are interested in.

All of this information has been gathered on the S.O.D.A grid. It is time to pull it all together. Direct them to pages 2 and 3 of the S.O.D.A. packet and the occupational results on page 4. This will help them to synthesize all of the information they have been gathering.

The purpose for considering all of this information is to write the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) with their VR counselor or guidance counselor or with whomever will be helping them with this planning process and could be included in the Individual Education Program (IEP). The goal is for the participant to be able to discuss the reasons behind their choices and back up these choices with facts because of all the work they have completed.

S.O.D.A. Review

- Where would you find the information you need to make a decision?
- Maybe it is time to look at the S.O.D.A. grid to review what you learned about:
 - Your SELF
 - Occupations of Interests
- And why did we do all this work?
 - To create an Individualized Plan for Employment

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Facilitator Notes:

Where would you find the information you need to make a decision?

- Maybe it is time to look at the S.O.D.A. grid to review what you learned about:
 - Your SELF
 - Occupations of Interests

It is time for the participants to review all they have learned about themselves. How does it feel for them to have been doing this process. How is this information going to help them in making a decision about a job choice or a career? How does this help them personally? Do they have more insight into who they are, how they learn, what they have for skills, how to get more skills, how to describe themselves as a worker?

And why did we do all this work?

- To create an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

The goal of this slide is to transition the participants to think about the employment plan and the next few slide introduce the components of the plan. There is a sample IPE worksheet after slide 215 and in their Participant Workbook.

Next we will go over the components of an employment plan.



Developing an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

- **An IPE has 5 major sections:**
 - Employment Goal
 - Services
 - Measures of Progress
 - Your Responsibilities
 - Necessary Accommodations
- Let's take a quick look at each section separately.

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Facilitator Notes:

Projected Time: 45 mins.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Participants will become familiar with the components of an Individual Plan for Employment.

This begins a section in developing a tentative employment plan (knowing that this will not be viable or accepted by VR until both the client and the VR Counselor have made the agreement together and the plan is signed).

The glass icon is a reminder that the Employment Plan is the “core” of the “D” or decision-making activities.

The participants are pulling all of their activities and data into a container, which is their plan.

This slide introduces the five components of an IPE. Next we will be talking about all of the components separately.

Employment Goal

- The most important challenge is deciding on the employment goal.
 - It is the specific occupation that you will pursue, once your plan is completed and approved.
 - Example – Employment Goal - Carpenter
- Examining and choosing an occupation that incorporates what you have learned about yourself and your occupational interest guides your decision.
- **Hint:** this is what we've been searching for during this workshop!

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Facilitator Notes:

Direct participants to go to the “D” page of their SODA packet to look at each of the components of an employment plan and on the sample IPE in their workbook.

Remind them that developing an employment goal has been **the purpose** of this career exploration workshop. However, finding a match using all the data that had been revealed is the key to a successful employment plan.

Reinforce the idea that finding a reasonable “match” between what they know about themselves, what they know about a possible occupation of interest and considerations for accommodations are the key to a successful plan.

The participants have already done some of this work by looking at the “S” and “O” pages in the SODA packet. They just need to continue the process so they can determine where the “matches” occur!

They may have a number of possible employment goals, and it is their responsibility to eventually narrow them down to one best choice with the help of their VR counselor.

Employment Goal

- Employment goal is:
 - A good “match” between your personal characteristics and an occupation that is compatible with those characteristics
 - Reasonable in terms of cost
 - Attainable within a reasonable time period
 - Available in your area (has good job outlook)
 - Approved by you and your VR counselor

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Facilitator Notes:

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Participants will learn how to develop the different components of an Individual Plan for Employment.

This may prompt some discussion of what is **reasonable**, **attainable** and **available**. Ask them to define these words and what they mean to them.

This is why occupational research is so important?

It may be helpful to develop a mock goal and work that goal through a tentative plan as you go over each of the components.

Or refer them to the Individualize Plan for Employment worksheet and walk them through that as you go over the sections.

Services

- A series of steps are identified as you work toward meeting your employment goal.
- Services might include:
 - On-going guidance and counseling
 - Necessary support services
 - Possible assistance with education or training
 - Activities linked with getting a job:
 - Resume, cover letter, practice interviewing, job shadows, informational interviews, networking.

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Facilitator Notes:

Have a discussion to answer questions about:

- the series of steps that could be identified; i.e., the resume needs to be done before applying for jobs
- the types of services that might be offered and arranged; i.e., these would be different for each individual
- the tentative cost for these services
- the funding sources to cover these expenses

Then, implementation begins.

Refer to the Individualized Plan for Employment worksheet, which is in the Participant Handbook and Facilitator Manual. The services create the outline for the plan, and the steps are coordinated to receive the right service at the right time.

They will need to become familiar with all the various resources that may be used to fund the expenses to reach this goal.

In the “A” (or Action) section that follows these slides, participants will be looking at resume writing, cover letters, practice interview questions, informational interviewing and networking strategies. These activities will be referenced but will not be discussed in detail during this workshop. They could go to the career center to get help with some of these job search activities.

Progress Measures

- Clearly defined steps, behaviors and actions taken to complete a goal within a specific timeframe
- Starts with:
 - An Approved Individualized Plan for Employment
 - Learning job seeking skills
 - Acquiring the necessary job related skills
 - Following the steps for training, when needed
- Ongoing documentation of benchmarks

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Facilitator Notes:

Progress on measures, benchmarks or guideposts are mutually developed with the VR Counselor. It is a system of clearly defined steps, behaviors and actions taken to complete a goal within a specific timeframe. The client/participant is encouraged to participate and do some work toward this progress. VR is there to help, guide, suggest, inform, support, encourage and reassure, but it is important that the client learn the skills they need for life-long career management.

The steps begin with:

- An Approved Individualized Plan for Employment
- Learning or improving their job seeking skills
- Acquiring or enhancing the necessary job related skills
- Following the steps for training, when needed

During the process, the client and the counselor are encouraged to maintain ongoing documentation of benchmarks and progress.

Your Responsibilities

What VR expects from you:

- Continue to have contact with your VR counselor
- If training is necessary:
 - Complete application for training and financial aid
 - Provide progress reports
 - Finish training program within timeframe
- If doing job search -
 - Active participation in the job search; use the skills you learned – networking, labor market research, informational interviewing, job shadowing
- Notification when you get the job offer. 😊

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Facilitator Notes:

This section is a concrete reminder that completion of this plan is their responsibility, with the assistance of their VR counselor. VR wants to know when the person runs into a problem they cannot solve, has a situation that they may need help to resolve, or needs guidance when making a decision. They have a strong support system with VR.

Solicit possible ideas from the group in terms of their responsibilities.

Accommodations

- Accommodations will be discussed with you to make sure the right services are provided.
- Your VR counselor will assist with necessary accommodations, as needed.
- Disclosure for the purpose of reasonable accommodations for both employment and training will be considered.

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Facilitator Notes:

Accommodations will be discussed with you to make sure the right services are provided to ensure success.

Your VR counselor will assist with necessary accommodations, as needed.

Disclosure for the purpose of reasonable accommodations for both employment and training will be considered, and together you will decide when to talk with the employer or school about what accommodations will be needed.

Accommodations are provided after assessments, evaluations, professional consultation and a comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation needs have been completed. Having the appropriate accommodation for the present situation is the key to success.

Remind them that their VR Counselor is the first consultant to seek for gathering accommodation information. An accommodation is specific to the person who needs it.



Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

- The purpose of Career Exploration is to discover and gather information for the development of the Individualized Plan for Employment.
- You will continue this process with your counselor.
- To assist you, there is a worksheet in your Participant Workbook for developing an IPE.
- Good luck in developing your plan and your eventual employment!

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Facilitator Notes:

Plan development, completion and approval are mutual responsibilities of the client and the VR Counselor. Client input, especially with information from the Transition Career Exploration Workshop, is critical to deciding on an appropriate employment goal and measures toward achieving that goal. Very clear steps need to be strategized before any further activity can occur.

No costs associated with a plan may be funded without the pre-approval of their Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

This is the “A” action part of the SODA.

The IPE Worksheet follows this slide. It is also in the Participant Workbook.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Educational Support and Services Program for K-12

- Beginning in Grade 9, students in this program will be asked about their goals after graduating from High School.
- At this point, IEP includes these goals and the steps the student, family, teachers and others will take to achieve these goals.
- Good idea to invite the VR Counselor to IEP meetings.
- VR referral suggested at 2 years before graduation .

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Facilitator Notes:

Please read the slide when this is relevant to the group of participants.

The Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Some students receive educational support and services in school as part of an Individualized Education Program or IEP.

Beginning in grade 9, students who have an IEP will be asked about their goals for what they would like to do after they graduate from high school. The IEP will include information about these goals and the steps that the student, family, teachers and others will take to help the student reach his/her goals.

It is helpful for students who are working with VR to share their IEP goals with their counselor. Inviting VR Counselors to the IEP meeting is a good way to ensure that everyone knows and understands the student's goals.

DVR recommends that students are referred for services two years before they are planning to graduate or exit school.

There is a sample IEP in the Participant Workbook.